



**Tear Down the
Barriers to Learning**

**Union Learning Works
Become a Union
Learning Rep Today!**

Ulf Union
learning
fund
Northern Ireland

The trade union movement has a long and proud history of providing education for working people.

Union Learning Representatives are at the forefront of efforts to improve the skills of the workforce.

What is a ULR?

- ULRs are trained to support learning at workplaces and to work with their fellow employees and employers for the benefit of all.
- ULRs raise employee awareness of the benefits of learning and training.
- ULRs work to identify learning and skill needs in the workforce.
- Using the union structures ULRs negotiate learning agreements with employers.
- ULRs provide learning advice and guidance on the latest training initiatives and programmes.
- ULRs may negotiate learning facilities with employers, including learning centres in the workplace.
- ULRs support innovative workplace development projects.
- ULRs secure equal opportunities in learning and training.

Why I became a Union Learning Representative

ULR's in their own words

(All Participants completed ICTU Union Learning Reps Course 2014/2015)

Pearl Gibson - UNITE



I wanted to become a ULR because I read the literature that was supplied by Unite the Union and it sounded very interesting.

I wanted to help my work colleagues in

Axa Insurance in relation to learning and to help give them confidence to better themselves within the workplace. It will be a great benefit to them and their families to help develop their essential skills.

Nicola Knight - NIPSA

As someone who has benefited from a good education, I am delighted to have the opportunity to help my work colleagues access these opportunities. Learning empowers, informs and boosts confidence and skills; these are all at the heart of trade unionism. As a NIPSA ULR I look forward to promoting learning and encouraging members that belonging to a union brings great rewards, and enticing non-members to join and enjoy all the benefits that being in a union offers.

Darrell Law - USDAW



I became a ULR to give something back to my fellow colleagues. The younger co-workers would regularly ask my advice, and it gave me a great feeling guiding them back into

education to provide them with the opportunity to expand their career prospects. I then met Lorna Morton who gave me the opportunity to become an USDAW Learning Rep

and I haven't looked back! I'm looking forward to helping more colleagues in the future.

Paula Macauley - USDAW

I had noticed USDAW'S project worker for Lifelong Learning, Lorna Morton, in my store advertising what courses were available for workers. I had not been aware that the union had this opportunity available. Once I had enquired, Lorna asked me if I be interested in becoming a ULR. Since then, a number of my colleagues have since done a number of courses such as ICT, Maths, English and Accountancy.

It gives me great satisfaction, knowing I can help and support others and enhance other peoples learning and careers.

Gareth Moore - AEGIS



I became a Union Learning Representative as I recognised the need in my local area for additional education for all levels. I feel education is the best tool for creating social

mobility which I feel is greatly needed. I want to make a positive impact to my community and workplace.

Jason Latimer - UNITE

I was asked by my Unite Union Rep if I was interested in taking up the role of Union learning Rep. I was a bit sceptical at first thinking that there would be a lack of interest from the current workforce, but after talking to the members and handing out a questionnaire there was a huge response and we are now about to start our first Essential Skills course with 21 people signed up for ICT.

Fiona Lauigan - **AEGIS**



I became a Union Learn Rep as I could see the potential in the people I worked with and wanted to broaden their horizon. Each person has the potential to learn if they have someone with the willingness and patience to show them how.

Jackie Maloué - **NIPSA**

A need was identified for a ULR, so I decided to put my name forward to attend the training course and see what was involved. During the course I found areas which would apply to my job and benefit people who may take up further education especially Essential Skills training.

Ryan Elliott - **AEGIS**



When I first heard about Union Learning I was very interested in learning and attending courses that may be on offer from my workplace. When the opportunity came to attend this course I thought this is a perfect way to find out more information about it. After the first day of the course I had a very good understanding of what my role would be as a Union Learning Rep

and I've looked forward to attending the course every week since.

Michael Kennedy - **NIPSA**

I became a Union Learning Representative in order to promote the benefits of learning in the workplace. This may consist of 're-skilling' the workforce, but it also involves enhancing skills so that the individual may avail of other opportunities within and outside of work.

The Union Learning Representative can also signpost individuals to higher and further education paths that could ultimately lead to a change of career (depending on the appetite for change). Ultimately, the services of a ULR are a valuable resource to have.

Jacqueline Morrow - **AEGIS**



There are many reasons I wanted to become a ULR. I find the whole project exciting and interesting. I believe that a ULR is a valuable resource that can open up learning opportunities and encourage people back to education. I feel I could offer learning possibilities to colleagues, family and friends, and to explore the ULR opportunities available to me. I wanted to discover what

Union Learning Works

options are available to people who had been failed by the education systems.

Adrian McMenamin - **AEGIS**



I became a Union Learn Project Worker to help inspire and encourage work colleagues back into learning. Throughout my working life I have encountered many colleagues that have either had a bad educational experience or have skills that are no longer relevant for the present day employment opportunities. I see the role of a Union Learn Project Worker as an integral part of getting these

colleagues back into lifelong learning by helping them obtain new skills relevant for today's workplace whilst also providing them with a new positive outlook on learning.

John Doherty - **UNITE**

I became a ULR because I believe education is a fantastic way of promoting our union within the workplace and reaching out to members and showing our union can reach all aspects of work and home life and we are here to improve workers education as well as their terms and conditions.

Thomas McMullan - **GMB**



The reasons for my interest in becoming a Union Learning Rep are not only to improve my learning skills but to make others aware of what is available to improve their learning and skills. The ULR course helped me to promote the benefits among the membership and establish a better working partnership with their employer.

Touy Gorrell - **USDAW**

I wanted to become a ULR to help others with their life skills and to help members grow and brush-up their English and Maths, as they may not have done so well when they were at school.

It is satisfying for me to know I have helped others.

“Union Learning Representatives have helped to negotiate and broker learning agreement opportunities which deliver real and tangible benefits to the learners and the business. Their success is rooted in their familiarity on the shop-floor, and without them, the enormous growth in workplace learning would not have happened.” **Stephen Farry**, Employment and Learning Minister



Why are ULRs so important?

- ULRs are important partners in promoting the value of learning and training in workplaces.
- ULRs have the confidence of workers and so can play a significant role in engaging those who might otherwise be reluctant to discuss their training needs.
- There is growing evidence that more individuals will undertake learning and training if offered information, advice and support from a ULR.
- ULRs are trained to undertake their role and they have on-going opportunities to do further related training.
- ULRs provide an additional source of information about learning opportunities and can be crucial in reaching part-time and shift workers.

The Benefits to Employers

All organisations benefit from having a skilled, trained and efficient workforce. The Union Learning Representative provides the vital information, support and encouragement that enable employees to update and acquire the new skills necessary in the world of work and beyond.

The ULR helps organisations to:

- Promote a positive attitude to learning and skills amongst employees.
- Improve the skills and employability of the workforce, helping them to become more adaptable to change.
- Increase participation in workplace learning.
- Provide accessible independent advice and support for employees about learning, at shop level, where it is needed.
- Introduce and help develop a “learning culture”, where training and education are highly valued in the workplace.

Do you have what it takes to be a Union Learning Rep?

Would you like to:

- Develop your own knowledge of learning?
- Help people acquire new skills?
- Identify learning and skills needs in the workplace?
- Promote training in the workplace?
- Encourage people back into learning?

You will receive 5 days accredited training and support from your own union.

Union Learning Reps Training Stage 1

The 5 day stage 1 course is designed to introduce the role and rights of the ULR, provide the skills and knowledge the ULR will need to support a culture of learning in the workplace. The course includes,

- Workplace Learning and the Union Learning Representative
- Essential Skills
- Equalities and Learning for Trade Unions
- Unions Addressing Learning Needs in the Workplace
- Union Learning Representative Role and Functions
- Unions Getting Organised to Promote Learning
- Union Learning Representatives – Skills

For further information on becoming a Union Learning Rep please contact your Union office or the ICTU Union Learning team at info@ictuni.org